

April 24, 2015

Andrew Slavitt
Acting Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Mr. Slavitt:

The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council (the Council) is writing to express concern regarding one component of the Managed Long-Term Supports and Services (MLTSS) system being planned in Louisiana. For the past two years the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) has led planning efforts to bring long-term supports and services under the umbrella of managed care. DHH is to be commended for actively engaging a broad array of stakeholders and building consensus throughout the process. The Council has been an active participant in both the MLTSS Advisory Committee and an Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities System Transformation Core Work Group.

DHH has shared its plan for the overall design of MLTSS with stakeholders. This design reflects the consensus reached by DHH and the MLTSS Advisory Committee, and is one the Council believes reflects the CMS guiding principles of MLTSS, as well as those of the National Council on Disability and other national disability groups. While the Council believes all of those principles are critically important, one principle is paramount to the success of MLTSS – the inclusion of both institutional and home and community-based services. The MLTSS Advisory Committee, along with DHH officials, agreed that if managed long-term care is to be successful, it needs to cover all long-term supports and services.

Louisiana plans to issue two Requests for Proposals. The first to be released will cover services for adults served by the Office of Aging and Adult Services and the second will cover services for children and adults served by the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities. DHH sent the RFP for the Office of Aging and Adult Services' population to Louisiana's Division of Administration for approval with both institutional and home and community-based services included. The Division of Administration has delayed the release of the RFP, reportedly because the nursing home industry is lobbying to be carved out.

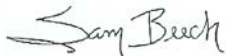
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Louisianans have contributed their valuable time, experience and knowledge by serving on the MLTSS Advisory Committee and made a clear recommendation, with agreement by DHH, that institutional services be included in MLTSS. Louisiana already spends the majority of its long-term care dollars on institutional services. Advocates have supported the move to MLTSS with the expectation it would lead to additional opportunities and resources for people to receive supports in their own homes and move out of institutional settings. If nursing homes are excluded from the RFP, the support for MLTSS from a majority of stakeholders is expected to disappear.

While we recognize there may be little CMS can do at this point, it is important for the Council to inform you of our serious concerns regarding this latest development. The Council requests that should an opportunity arise where CMS can intervene, we urge you to do so and prevent the nursing home carve out from MLTSS in Louisiana.

If you wish to discuss these concerns, or the Council's involvement with MLTSS, please contact the Council's Executive Director, Sandee Winchell, at (225) 342-6804 or sandee.winchell@la.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sam Beech".

Sandra "Sam" Beech
Chairperson

SB/SW

c: Kathy Kliebert, Secretary, Department of Health and Hospitals